

The Hon. Paula McCandlis

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

RICARDO BARRAZA VIZCARRA,

Defendant.

CASE NO. MJ20-561

COMPLAINT for VIOLATION

21 U.S.C. § 841(a)

BEFORE United States Magistrate Judge Paula McCandlis, Seattle, Washington.

The undersigned complainant being duly sworn states:

Count One

(Possession of Methamphetamine and Heroin with Intent to Distribute)

On or about September 1, 2020, in Pierce County, within the Western District of Washington, RICARDO BARRAZA VIZCARRA did knowingly and intentionally possess, with the intent to distribute, and aid and abet the possession of with the intent to distribute, controlled substances, to wit: methamphetamine and heroin, substances controlled under Title 21, United States Code.

It is further alleged that this offense involved 50 grams or more of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its isomers.

1 It is further alleged that this offense involved 1 kilogram or more of a mixture or
2 substance containing a detectable amount of heroin.

3 All in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and
4 841(b)(1)(A) and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2.

5
6 The undersigned complainant, Shawna McCann, Special Agent, being first duly
7 sworn on oath, hereby deposes and says:

8 **TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE**

9 1. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) and
10 have been employed with the FBI since September, 2017. I am currently assigned to the
11 Seattle Field Division where I am a member of the violent crime, gang, and Transnational
12 Organized Crime – Western Hemisphere squad. In this capacity, I investigate, *inter alia*,
13 violations of the Controlled Substance Act, Title 21, United States Code, Section 801 *et*
14 *seq.*, and related offenses. I have received specialized training in the enforcement and
15 investigation of the Controlled Substance Act. I have received over 400 hours of
16 classroom training including, but not limited to, drug identification, drug interdiction,
17 money laundering techniques and schemes, smuggling, and the investigation of
18 individuals and/or organizations involved in the illegal possession, possession for sale,
19 sales, importation, smuggling, manufacturing, and trafficking of controlled substances.

20 2. In my role as a Special Agent for the FBI, I have participated in narcotics
21 investigations (e.g., heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine) that have resulted
22 in the arrest of individuals and the seizure of illicit narcotics and/or narcotics-related
23 evidence and the forfeiture of narcotics-related assets. I have been involved in the service
24 of federal and state search warrants as part of these investigations. I have encountered
25 and have become familiar with various tools, methods, trends, paraphernalia, and related
26 articles utilized by various traffickers in their efforts to import, export, conceal, and
27 distribute controlled substances. I am also familiar with the manner in which drug
28 traffickers use telephones, often cellular telephones, to conduct their unlawful operations,

1 and how they code their conversations to disguise their unlawful activities. I am also
2 familiar with the various methods of packaging, delivering, transferring, and laundering
3 drug proceeds. Additionally, through my training and experience, I can identify illegal
4 drugs by sight, odor, and texture.

5 3. I have also worked on drug investigations involving the use of court-
6 authorized wiretaps under Title III. In that capacity, I have had the opportunity to
7 monitor, listen to, and review transcripts and line sheets (prepared by linguists)
8 documenting the content of hundreds of intercepted conversations involving the
9 trafficking of cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, and other narcotics, by persons who
10 used some form of code to attempt to thwart law enforcement detection. I have also
11 interviewed defendants at the time of their arrest and have debriefed, spoken with, and/or
12 interviewed numerous drug dealers or confidential sources (informants) at proffer and
13 field interviews who were experienced in speaking in coded conversation over the
14 telephone. From these interviews, and also from discussions with other experienced
15 agents, I have gained knowledge regarding the various methods, techniques, codes,
16 and/or jargon used by drug traffickers in the course of their criminal activities, including
17 their use of firearms to protect their narcotics-related activities and of cellular telephones
18 and other electronic means to facilitate communications while avoiding law enforcement
19 scrutiny.

20 4. I have written affidavits in support of court-authorized federal warrants and
21 orders in the Western District of Washington for GPS tracking of telephones, Pen
22 Register/Trap and Trace, and search warrants. Additionally, I have testified in grand jury
23 proceedings, written investigative reports, and conducted and participated in numerous
24 interviews of drug traffickers of various roles within drug organizations, which has
25 provided me with a greater understanding of the methods by which drug trafficking
26 organizations operate.

27 5. I am an investigative law enforcement officer of the United States within
28 the meaning of 18 U.S.C. § 2510(7). As such, I am empowered to conduct investigations

1 of, and to make arrests for, violations of the Controlled Substance Act, Title 21, United
2 States Code, Section 801 *et seq.*, and related offenses.

3 6. In writing this affidavit, I specifically consulted with DEA Special Agent
4 Kevin Palermo, who is the lead agent for the case for which this affidavit is written.
5 Agent Palermo has managed and been involved in this investigation since its
6 commencement in December 2018. Agent Palermo has been employed as an agent for the
7 DEA since August 2016. During his employment, Agent Palermo has also worked on
8 drug investigations involving the use of court-authorized wiretaps under Title III. In that
9 capacity, Agent Palermo has monitored, listened to, and reviewed transcripts and line
10 sheets both in English and Spanish (prepared by linguists) documenting the content of
11 hundreds of intercepted conversations involving the trafficking of cocaine,
12 methamphetamine, heroin, and other narcotics, by persons who used some form of code
13 to thwart law enforcement. Prior to his employment as a DEA Agent, Agent Palermo was
14 employed as a police officer in the Village of Lincolnshire in Lake County, Illinois, from
15 December 2014 to August 2016. In that capacity, Agent Palermo was responsible for
16 providing and promoting public safety in the Village of Lincolnshire and the State of
17 Illinois.

18 7. The facts set forth in this Complaint are based on my own personal
19 knowledge; knowledge obtained from other individuals who participated in this
20 investigation, including other law enforcement officers; my review of documents and
21 records related to this investigation; and information gained through my training and
22 experience. I have not included all facts known to me obtained in this investigation, but
23 only those facts necessary to set forth probable cause in support of the offense alleged in
24 Count 1 above.

25 **PURPOSE OF AFFIDAVIT**

26 8. This Affidavit is made in support of a Complaint against RICARDO
27 BARRAZA VIZCARRA for one count of *Possession of Controlled Substances with*
28

1 *Intent to Distribute*, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1),
 2 (b)(1)(A).

3 **SUMMARY OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

4 9. This investigation is being conducted by DEA, FBI, Snohomish Regional
 5 Drug Task Force (SRDTF), Skagit County Drug Task Force (SCDTF), and Seattle Police
 6 Department (SPD), with the assistance of other law enforcement agencies, of suspects
 7 associated with the Jimenez Hernandez and Peinado Trans-National Criminal
 8 Organizations (TCO), who are operating in the Western District of Washington.

9 10. During the course of this investigation, agents have obtained authorization
 10 in the Western District of Washington to intercept wire communication and over multiple
 11 target telephones, and to receive GPS tracking information associated with these phones,
 12 including but not limited to the telephones summarized in the following table:

13 Object	TT¹	User	Date of Order
14 425-345-8051	TT3	Villasenor	October 15, 2019
15 425-410-6962	TT4	Villasenor	October 15, 2019
16 206-578-9119	TT6	Ramirez Menses	October 15, 2019
17 425-345-8051	TT3	Villasenor	November 22, 2019
18 425-410-6962	TT4	Villasenor	November 22, 2019
19 541-730-0001	TT16	De Leon	November 22, 2019
20 206-460-9015	TT17	Pollestad	November 22, 2019
21 206-929-8323	TT22	Pantoja	November 22, 2019
22 425970-2993	TT24	Pollestad	November 26, 2019
23 425-387-3791	TT40	Rodriguez Moreno	April 9, 2020
24 425-387-3791	TT40	Rodriguez Moreno	May 27, 2020
25 425-263-6587	TT41	Jose Morales Flores	May 27, 2020
26 425-387-3791	TT40	Rodriguez Moreno	June 22, 2020
27 425-263-6587	TT41	Jose Morales Flores	June 22, 2020
28 425-465-7350	TT48	Jose Morales Flores	June 22, 2020

26 ¹ "TT" stands for "Target Telephone" and is an identifier applied to all phones identified in this investigation. In
 27 this affidavit, when discussing an intercepted conversation, I will generally indicate the speaker followed by the
 28 Target Telephone identifier in parentheses. Not all Target Telephones were intercepted. Some Target Telephones
 are the subject of tracking warrants or pen register/trap and trace orders only. Some Target Telephones were are
 simply identified, with no further action taken.

11. On May 31, 2020, investigators intercepted communications between Jose Morales Flores (TT41), and the user of TT49, later identified as RICARDO BARRAZA VIZCARRA (session 259). During the call, Morales Flores informed BARRAZA VIZCARRA that he was calling on behalf of “Ansiano”, and agreed to meet BARRAZA VIZCARRA in Kent, Washington. Morales Flores asked BARRAZA VIZCARRA to send him the address. In a subsequent text message (session 260), BARRAZA VIZCARRA sent Morales Flores the address to Shushinola Sushi y Mariscos estilo Sinaloa restaurant located at 24817 Pacific Highway South, #206, Kent, Washington. A few minutes later, Morales Flores replied (sessions 261-262) that the GPS was telling him “two hours” and he would arrive at 6:00 pm.

12. Immediately following the above conversation, Jose Morales Flores had a conversation with a Mexico-based telephone number, the user identified as “Abraham” and “Anciano” (session 265). Abraham asked who Morales Flores would be taking the “water” [methamphetamine] to. Morales Flores said that to the guy that he (Morales Flores) got the number for [BARRAZA VIZCARRA (TT49)]. Morales Flores said that Joaquin had sent him (Morales Flores) a number to talk to the guy [BARRAZA VIZCARRA] and take care of it. Based on my training and experience, I know that “water” is a common term used by narcotics traffickers to refer to methamphetamine.

13. Abraham said that (Joaquin) was his (Abraham’s) brother. Abraham said that he (Morales Flores) should go take one to him, to the car guy [Arias Garcia], and to the other guy that he (Abraham) had already told Morales Flores about BARRAZA VIZCARRA]. Abraham said that it would be another two (2) [two pounds of methamphetamine].

14. At approximately 5:15 pm, investigators established surveillance in the vicinity of the aforementioned restaurant in preparation for the meeting between Jose Morales Flores and BARRAZA VIZCARRA. At approximately 5:54 pm, investigators intercepted a text message between Morales Flores and BARRAZA VIZCARRA, over TT41 (session 266), in which BARRAZA VIZCARRA informed Morales Flores that

1 he was “around here already” [already near the restaurant]. Morales Flores responded
2 that “it” [his GPS] says 13 minutes (session 267).

3 15. At approximately 6:08 pm, investigators observed a gray in color Jeep
4 Patriot, with Washington license plate #BPY5228, enter the parking lot and park in the
5 vicinity of the “Del Rio” Supermarket located at 24811 Pacific Highway South, Kent,
6 Washington.² Investigators identified Jose Morales Flores as the driver of the Gray Jeep
7 Patriot (BPY5228) via comparison to his Washington driver’s license photo. There
8 appeared to be an occupant in the front passenger seat of the Gray Jeep Patriot
9 (BPY5228) that investigators were unable to identify.

10 16. Concurrent to Jose Morales Flores’ arrival, investigators intercepted a call
11 between Morales Flores and BARRAZA VIZCARRA, over TT41 (session 269) in which
12 Morales Flores asked BARRAZA VIZCARRA what he was driving. BARRAZA
13 VIZCARRA replied that he was driving a “gray Infiniti”. Morales Flores
14 informed BARRAZA VIZCARRA that he had arrived already, was driving a Jeep, and
15 was by a market named “Del Rio”. BARRAZA VIZCARRA informed Morales Flores
16 that he (BARRAZA VIZCARRA) was behind Morales Flores on his left.

17 17. At approximately 6:09 pm, investigators observed the Gray Jeep Patriot
18 (BPY5228), driven by Morales Flores, relocate near a silver in color Infiniti sedan [Silver
19 Infiniti G35 (BSU4754)] across the parking lot. The driver of the silver Infiniti,
20 a Hispanic male with a dark t-shirt and a beard, exited his vehicle and appeared to meet
21 briefly with Morales Flores, who remained seated inside the Gray Jeep Patriot
22 (BPY5228), at Morales Flores’ driver’s front window before returning to the Silver
23 Infiniti G35 (BSU4754). Approximately two minutes later, investigators observed
24 the Gray Jeep Patriot (BPY5228) depart the parking lot onto Pacific Highway traveling
25
26

27 ² The Del Rio Supermarket is located to the immediate north of the Sushinola Sushi y Mariscos estilo Sinaloa
28 restaurant described herein.

1 south. The Silver Infiniti G35 (BSU4754) remained parked in the lot with the Hispanic
2 male seated inside.

3 18. A short while later, the Hispanic male exited the silver Infiniti and
4 proceeded to converse with an unknown Hispanic male (UHM), wearing a baseball cap
5 and brown sweatshirt, located near a vehicle parked next to him. Investigators observed
6 the hoods on the two vehicles parked next to the Silver Infiniti G35 (BSU4754) were
7 raised.³ The Hispanic male reentered the Silver Infiniti G35 (BSU4754) shortly
8 thereafter.

9 19. At approximately 6:32 pm, investigators drove around the restaurant
10 parking lot behind the Silver Infiniti G35 (BSU4754) in an attempt to identify the license
11 plate number affixed to the vehicle. Investigators identified Washington license plate
12 #BSU4754 affixed to the vehicle. According to the Washington Department of Licensing,
13 Washington License #BSU4754 is a silver/aluminum in color 2007 Infiniti
14 G35 registered to Kareli Tamayo at 7637 Pacific Avenue, APT 62, Tacoma, Washington.

15 20. A Washington Department of Licensing inquiry of the aforementioned
16 address revealed a driver, BARRAZA VIZCARRA, with the same listed address.
17 Investigators positively identified the driver of Silver Infiniti G35 (BSU4754), and the
18 user of TT49, as BARRAZA VIZCARRA based on a comparison to the aforementioned
19 driver's license photograph. Surveillance was terminated shortly thereafter.

20 21. Based on my training and experience, I believe Jose Morales Flores and
21 BARRAZA VIZCARRA, using TT49, coordinated a meeting to conduct a narcotics
22 transaction, specifically for two pounds of methamphetamine. An analysis of intercepted
23 communications between Jose Morales Flores and UM8843, identified as "Abraham" and
24 "Anciano", using Mexico telephone number 52-6681938843, over TT41, revealed
25 "Abraham's/Anciano's" role as a broker for suspected narcotics transactions.
26

27 ³ Investigators believe one of the vehicles near the silver Infiniti had mechanical issue(s) and was being
28 diagnosed and/or repaired by the UHM.

1 Investigators intercepted communications in which “Abraham/Anciano” asked Jose
2 Morales Flores to deliver various quantities of suspected methamphetamine to
3 individuals, including BARRAZA VIZCARRA (session 265), within the greater Seattle
4 metropolitan area. UM8843 and Jose Morales Flores’ use of coded language and
5 discussions about pricing is consistent with narcotics-related conversation. Additionally,
6 based on my training and experience the way the meeting was conducted, a short
7 interaction in a public parking lot, is consistent with a meeting for a narcotics transaction.

8 22. In August 2020, a remote surveillance camera was installed at 1036 S 74th
9 Street, Tacoma, Washington (Location 9). On August 13, 2020, investigators observed
10 BARRAZA VIZCARRA walk from the rear of this residence to the front of the residence
11 carrying garbage. BARRAZA VIZCARRA walked to and from the rear to the front
12 several times. Moreover, on a near daily basis since August 13, 2020, BARRAZA
13 VIZCARRA has been observed arriving at Location 9 and remaining there overnight. In
14 addition, BARRAZA VIZCARRA’s known vehicle, a Silver Infiniti G35 (BSU4754) has
15 been observed parked at Location 9 on a near daily basis. Based on surveillance
16 observations, investigators believe that BARRAZA VIZCARRA resides at Location 9.

17 23. On August 28, 2020, the Honorable Mary Alice Theiler issued a search
18 warrant that included the following location: **Target Location 9 (TL9): 1036 S 74th**
19 **Street, Tacoma, Washington.** The affidavit in support of the warrant sets forth why
20 agents believed TL9 was the residence of Ricardo Barraza Vizcarra.

21 24. On September 1, 2020, during the search of **Location 9 at 1036 S 74th**
22 **Street, Tacoma, Washington,** investigators located and detained RICARDO
23 BARRAZA VIZCARRA. Also in the residence, although not detained, were his
24 girlfriend and a minor child. BARRAZA VIZCARRA was read his *Miranda* rights in
25 Spanish, by a Spanish-speaking investigator, and BARRAZA VIZCARRA indicated in
26 Spanish that he understood his rights and agreed to speak with the investigator.
27 BARRAZA VIZCARRA was asked, in Spanish, if there were any drugs in the residence.
28 BARRAZA VIZCARRA stated that there was “crystal” and “chiva” in the back

1 bedroom. BARRAZA VIZCARRA explained that “crystal” was methamphetamine and
2 “chiva” was heroin. BARRAZA VIZCARRA stated that there was about one pound of
3 methamphetamine and a kilogram of heroin in the back bedroom. BARRAZA
4 VIZCARRA was then asked if there was any money in the residence. Following this
5 question, BARRAZA VIZCARRA asked for a lawyer and no additional statements were
6 made or elicited from BARRAZA VIZCARRA.

7 25. With the assistance of a narcotics-detecting K9, investigators located
8 approximately one pound of a white, crystal substance, one kilogram of a brown
9 substance, and 1,000 pills (potentially containing fentanyl) in the spare bedroom closet at
10 the residence. Additionally, investigators located between 20 to 30 pounds of a brown
11 substance in the basement of the residence, along with approximately 10 to 20 empty
12 wrappers indicative of additional pounds of narcotics.

13 26. Based on my training and experience, and the training and experience of the
14 investigators on scene, including the narcotics-detecting K9, I believe the white, crystal
15 substance is methamphetamine and the brown substances are heroin. I further believe that
16 the seized substances contain 50 grams or more of a mixture or substance containing a
17 detectable amount of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its isomers and 1
18 kilogram or more of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of heroin.

19 27. The heroin seized from the basement of this residence was packaged in
20 individually vacuum sealed bags (see image below), each weighing approximately one
21 pound. Based on my training and experience, I believe that this type of packaging and
22 overall quantity of narcotics, separately packaged in individually weighed and sealed
23 bags, is indicative of narcotics trafficking and distribution.

24 //

25 //

26 //

27 //

28 //

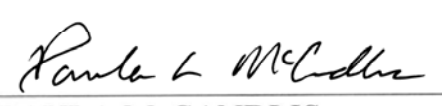


Based on the aforementioned facts, I believe that RICARDO BARRAZA VIZCARRA committed the crime of *Possession of a Methamphetamine and Heroin with Intent to Distribute*, all in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(A) and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2.


SHAWNA MCCANN, Complainant
Special Agent, FBI

The above-named agent provided a sworn statement to the truth of the foregoing complaint by video conference call on this 1st day of September, 2020. Based on the Complaint and Affidavit sworn to by the above-named agent, the Court hereby finds that there is probable cause to believe the defendant committed the offense set forth in the Complaint.

DATED this 1st day of September, 2020.


PAULA McCANDLIS
United States Magistrate Judge